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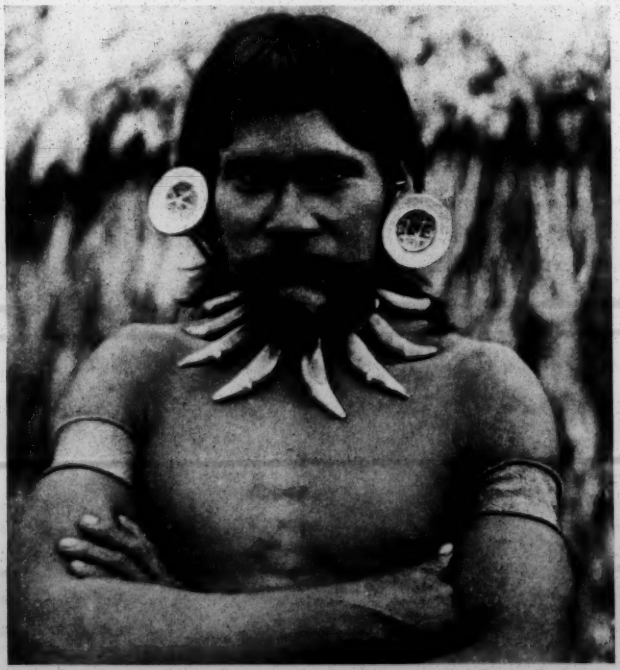

© *Photograph from Dr. W. L. Schurz*

FOUR NATIONS DISPUTE HIS HOMELAND

This Huitoto Indian of the Putumayo country lives near the meeting place of the boundaries of Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and Brazil —South America's latest trouble spot (See Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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The Upper Amazon and Its Seaports 2,000 Miles from the Sea

FOUR South American nations are involved in the dispute over Leticia, a tiny Amazon River village of 500 inhabitants near the meeting place of the borders of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Brazil.

Since last September, when Peruvians captured this hitherto unheard-of river port, Colombia has threatened reprisals and Brazil has issued warnings that its neutrality must be observed. In recent weeks troops, airplanes and gunboats of three powers are reported to be concentrating in South America's newest "hot spot." Brazil has agreed to act as an arbiter between Colombia and Peru, and a peaceful solution of the question is being sought.

A Seaport in a Jungle

Leticia presents the strange paradox of a seaport that is nearly 2,000 miles removed from the ocean in the midst of a jungle. Commercially, it has almost no importance, for vessels must anchor offshore, and the few buildings of the town are mostly low, straw-thatched cottages. Tabatinga, the Brazilian fortified town two miles farther down the river, offers much better port facilities.

The navigable headwaters of the Amazon and the farthest inland seaports in the world, however, are the real prizes at stake in this region, which has long been shown by cross-hatched lines (one of the map-makers' ways of indicating disputed territory) on the charts of South America.

Since the collapse of the wild rubber market the Amazon Valley above Leticia has resumed commercial importance through a wide variety of products. From the llanos and selvas of Colombia and Peru come cotton, cacao, sugar, and cattle, while from the forests come precious woods, nuts, and plants used in medicine.

Rubber, which first entered commerce from the upper reaches of the Amazon, still plays a part in the economic life of the district, and may resume its old leadership when plantations are developed.

A small fleet of steamers moves busily up and down all the large affluents of the Amazon. It is possible to travel in comparative comfort from Belém (Pará), at the mouths of the Amazon, to the city of Yurimaguas, far above disputed Leticia, in Peru. Ocean-going steamers regularly ascend the Amazon to Manáos, nearly 900 miles from Belém, and the same vessels could go up to Iquitos, Peru, more than 2,000 miles from the mouth. During the rainy season the Amazon branches rise from 30 to 50 feet.

"Bird-cage" Steamers and Rafts of Rubber

At one time a line of steamers was regularly in operation between Iquitos, a Peruvian river port nearly 300 miles above Leticia, and Callao, Peru, on the Pacific Ocean. The ships carried cargoes, without transshipment, 6,500 miles by way of the Amazon, the sea, and the Panama Canal, to connect two cities in the same country only 630 air-line miles apart!

The common type of steamer used on the Amazonian rivers for local trade is called a *gaiola*, or bird cage, because of the open superstructure, adapted to the tropical climate. On some of the upper branches of the Amazon the Mississippi type of stern-wheeler is employed.

Many other craft are seen. Peruvian Indians are especially skilled in making dugout canoes, some of which will hold fifteen persons. They are also famous builders of rafts, which are a much more common sight on the Peruvian tributaries than those of Brazil or Bolivia. Frequently, these rafts carry a thatched hut, in which the family lives during the slow journey down the river, and they may also carry cattle and pigs, or a flock of chickens.

Rubber, the black gold of the Amazon Valley, is frequently transported by making a raft of the balls of crude rubber, on which a low platform is built for those who pole it downstream.

Amazon Forest Not Impenetrable

The Amazonian forest is not quite as tangled and impenetrable as it has been pictured. The heavy growth of vines and trees that lines the banks of the main stream is probably responsible for this impression; but back of the matted curtain of vegetation the forest soon becomes fairly open, and one can usually walk through it without even the need of a machete to cut a way.

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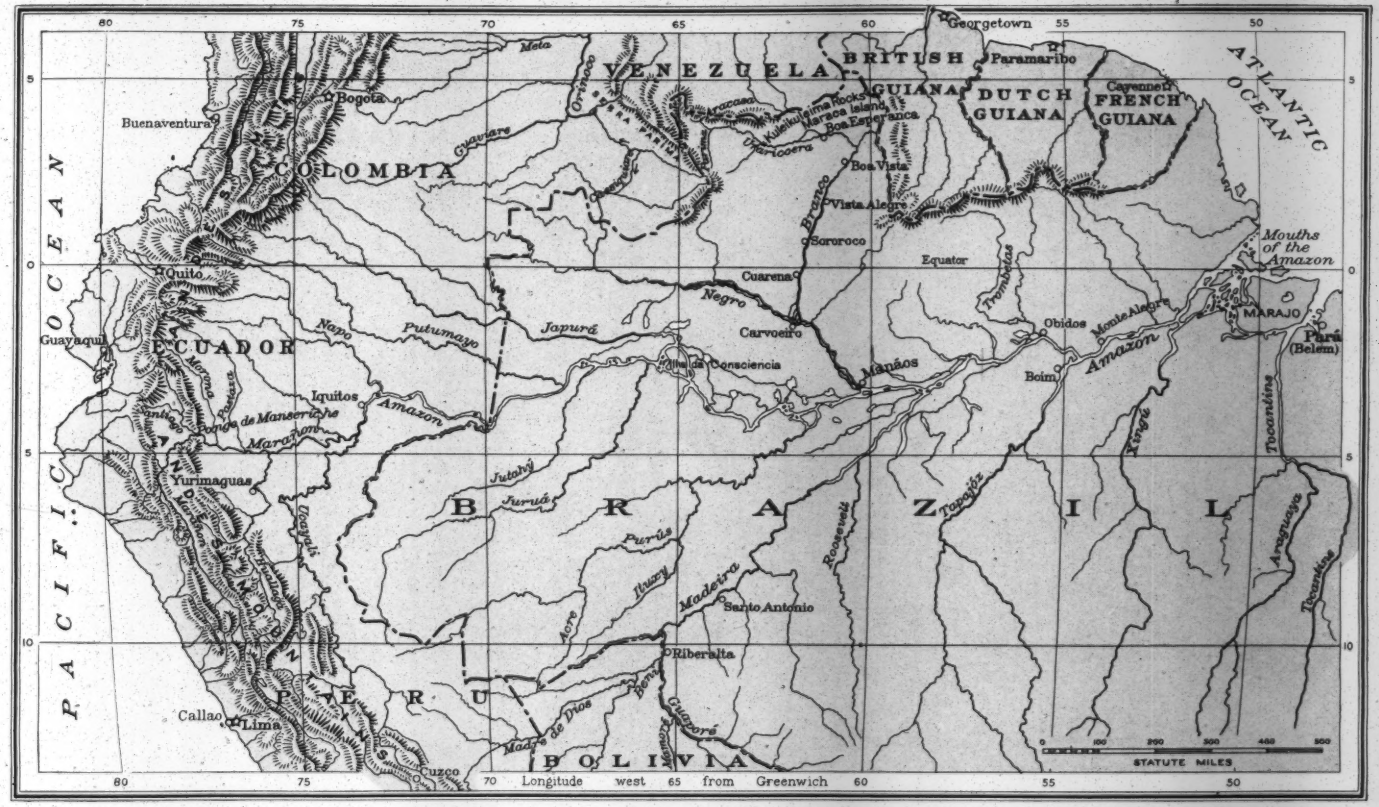

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THE DISPUTED LETICIA REGION IS ABOUT WHERE THE 70TH MERIDIAN CROSSES THE AMAZON RIVER

Cotton is loaded on ocean-going vessels at Yurimaguas, Peru, at the foot of the Andes, and Iquitos once boasted a through steamer service to the Pacific ports of Peru (See Bulletin No. 1).

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Florence Prepares for Opera and Music Festival

FLORENCE, officially Firenze, venerable Italian treasure chest of art, is making plans for an opera and music festival from April 22 to June 5. Musicians from many countries will take part in this international congress, the first of its kind ever held. Six operas will show the development of music during the nineteenth century.

While Florence has long been renowned as one of the "art capitals" of the world, the city has been making strides toward modernity in recent years.

Old City Walls Replaced by Boulevards

City planners of Florence first shocked antiquarians when they razed the city's old wall in the sixties. The wall site now hums with motor traffic. Later, a few ancient and medieval palaces, churches and huge residences partly or wholly disappeared to make room for public squares and wider streets.

Recently, it was proposed to build a new bridge across the Arno River within eyeshot of the Ponte Vecchio, the medieval shop-flanked span that has long been one of the most striking "sights" of Florence. More water mains and electric lights for dark streets also are contemplated.

These improvements will not obliterate old landmarks. The city, at least 2,000 years old, has outgrown three walls and has spread to both banks of the Arno.

Amid alternating periods of peace and turbulence the city has never lost its spirit. It felt the wrath of Caesar; frequent plagues left thousands of dead in their wake; Pisa and other near-by city states harassed its inhabitants when the Florentines themselves were not at their neighbors' doors with strong, well-equipped armies; European princes, with greedy eyes set upon its growing wealth and industrial position, stormed its walls; and, worst of all its troubles, perhaps, were medieval riots and outbreaks against the nobility. Dante, one of its most famous sons, was burned in effigy in a Florentine square. In the same square the monk Savonarola, the Martin Luther of Italy, was executed.

Once a Great Commercial City

Florence rose to the pinnacle of art and culture in the fourteenth century. It ranked among the great financial, industrial, and commercial centers of the known world. Its native-born artists, augmented by adopted wielders of the brush and sculptor's mallet, formed one of the most illustrious gatherings of all ages in the field of art.

Michelangelo, Giotto, Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael either were born or lived in Florence. Their studios produced sculptures for the public squares and the niches of the numerous palaces and famous paintings for palace walls. Meanwhile their brushes also applied frescoes to walls and ceilings of Florentine buildings, and wealthy merchants of the city accumulated art collections from the studios of foreign artists.

Florentine commerce expanded until the city had trade representatives in nearly all the important known ports. The ruling Medici family extended its financial influence. At one time it owned sixteen banks and made loans to powerful European rulers.

The florin, once Europe's most widely circulated coin, was named for the city

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Progress is difficult only when the jungle falls into low ground, where tobocal forms a thorny maze, or when there is a heavy growth of palm trees, creeper vines, bushes, and bamboo.

The outstanding tree of the upland jungle is the Brazil-nut tree, which towers high above the general level of the forest. Sometimes these giants have trunks nearly 40 feet in circumference. Scattered through this jungle are hundreds of species of trees that range in hardness from the featherweight balsa wood to the heavy, deep-red aitá, one of the hardest of timbers.

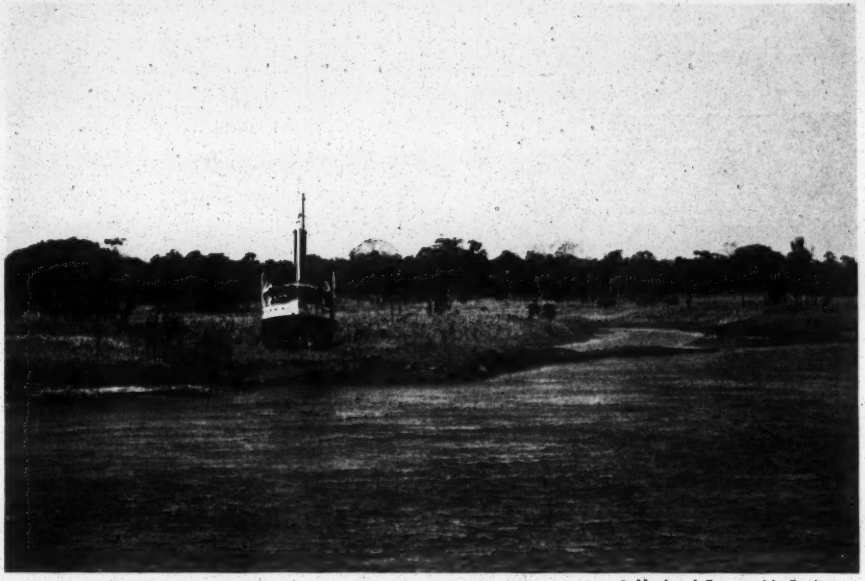
Still a Land of Mystery

In spite of four centuries of exploration, large areas of the upper Amazon still await the coming of the first white man. The courses of all the important rivers are known, but there is much *terra incognita* between some of them.

Even to Brazilians of the south and to Bolivians and Peruvians of the mountain country Amazonia, as the basin of the Amazon is called, is a forbidding and mysterious land. Insects, rather than wild animals, have discouraged exploration and settlement.

Note: For supplementary references about the Amazon Valley see: "Air Adventures in Peru," January, 1933, *National Geographic Magazine;* "Skypaths through Latin America," January, 1931; "Gigantic Brazil and Its Glittering Capital," December, 1930; "Through Brazil to the Summit of Mount Roraima," November, 1930; "Lure of Lima, City of Kings," June, 1930; "By Seaplane to Six Continents," September, 1928; "How Latin America Looks from the Air," October, 1927; "Amazon, Father of Waters," and "Exploring the Valley of the Amazon in a Hydroplane," April, 1926; and "Round about Bogotá," February, 1926.

Bulletin No. 1, January 23, 1933.



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THIS STEAMER MUST WAIT A YEAR BEFORE FLOATING AGAIN

The captain came downstream when the Amazon was at high stage. He thought he was in the channel, but when his vessel struck a sand bank the water dropped so rapidly that in two weeks he found his steamer was really on dry land. The Amazon has many channels in its course across the greatest forest region in the world. Only experienced pilots may bring ocean going ships safely into such seaports as Iquitos, Peru, more than 2,000 miles from the sea. (See map on page two.)

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Explorations of 1932 Mostly on "Vertical Scale"

THE exploration records of 1932 were made largely on a "vertical scale." Man reached during 1932 the greatest height in the air and the greatest depth beneath the surface of the sea ever attained in the known history of the world. Professor Auguste Piccard and Max Cosyns established the altitude record on August 18, when they ascended over Switzerland and northern Italy in a spherical, air-tight balloon "basket," to a height of 53,672 feet—slightly more than ten miles.

2,200 Feet beneath Surface of Sea

Dr. William Beebe and Otis Barton established the depth record in the Atlantic Ocean off Bermuda on September 22. In a heavy steel sphere, fashioned to withstand tremendous pressures, they descended to a depth of 2,200 feet. Thick quartz windows permitted the observation of sea life.

Mountain climbing was the most popular form of exploration during the year. German scientists, led by Dr. P. H. Barchers, scaled Mount Huascaran, in the Peruvian Andes, more than 22,000 feet high.

Both peaks of Mount McKinley, Alaska, tallest North American mountain, were climbed for the first time, on May 7 and 9, by Harry J. Lick, Alfred D. Lindley, and two associates. The south peak had been scaled once before, by Archdeacon Hudson Stuck, in 1913. Both summits are more than 20,000 feet high.

A Belgian scientific mission, headed by Comte de Grunne, on July 28, reached the top of a previously unscaled peak of the Stanley group of the Ruwenzori Mountains, in Africa, almost on the Equator. The summit climbed is 16,733 feet high.

In November two Americans, Terris Moore and Richard Burdsall, were reported from Shanghai to have reached the top of Minya Konka, 25,000-foot peak of western Szechwan, China, near the Tibetan border.

Amelia Earhart, American aviatrix, made the first solo flight across the Atlantic by a woman, in May. In June Miss Earhart was presented with the National Geographic Society's Special Gold Medal by President Hoover.

First across Asia by Motor

The Citroën-Haardt Trans-Asiatic Expedition, in which the National Geographic Society participated, completed its 7,370-mile crossing of Asia in February. All but 700 miles of the journey—from the heart of the Himalayas to Aqsu in Chinese Turkistan—were covered by track-type motor cars. Natural color photographs were obtained in regions never before visited by Europeans or Americans.

The first east-to-west crossing by a westerner of the Rub' al Khali, the extensive desert of southern Arabia, was made in the spring of 1932 by H. St. John Philby, by camel caravan. The desert was crossed for the first time—from south to north—in February, 1931, by Bertram Thomas.

The Soviet Union reported in August the discovery by a government ice-breaker of a group of hitherto unknown islands off the coast of western Siberia, near the mouth of the Yenisei River.

The Soviet ice-breaker, *Siberiakov*, made the passage from Archangel, Europe,

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and it first circulated there. The three-ball sign of the pawnbroker was adopted from the Medici coat-of-arms.

Unspoiled Byways Charm Tourists

Florence now has nearly 300,000 inhabitants and remains one of the most charming cities in Europe. Its valuable collections of paintings, sculptures, and frescoes have weathered war and riot, and near its modernized thoroughfares the traveler may stray into an atmosphere of centuries ago.

There are byways flanked with medieval buildings whose doorways bear the coats-of-arms of famous families. Many of the street corners are adorned with finely executed shrines—the works of Old Masters.

There remain a few of the open-front shops of other days where cabinet-makers, wool-combers and metal workers ply their trade, apparently oblivious of the motley crowd looking on. In a few blocks a pedestrian rubs elbows with visitors from a dozen countries, for tourist entertainment is a leading "industry."

Note: Students preparing papers or project assignments about Italy and Italian cities will find the following references useful: "The Perennial Geographer," *National Geographic Magazine*, October, 1930; "Stone Beehive Homes of the Italian Heel," February, 1930; "Genoa, Where Columbus Learned To Love the Sea," September, 1928; "Holidays among the Hill Towns of Umbria and Tuscany," April, 1928; "Siena's Palio, an Italian Inheritance from the Middle Ages," and "Under Radiant Italian Skies," August, 1926; "The Story and Legends of the Pontine Marshes," April, 1924; "The Splendor of Rome," June, 1922; and "Inexhaustible Italy," October, 1916.

Bulletin No. 2, January 23, 1933.

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FLORENCE IS ALSO NOTED FOR FINE WINES

Wrapped in straw and packed on these picturesque carts the products of the vineyards of Florence are sent over all Italy.

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Sakhalin Island, Where Japan and Soviet Russia Meet

SAKHALIN ISLAND, a long, bony finger of land off the coast of Siberia, has a new railroad, the first in the upper half of the island, ruled by Soviet Russia. The line connects the Okhinsk oil fields with Moscalevo Bay. Sakhalin's southern half is owned by Japan and bears the Japanese name Karafuto.

Despite frigid, foggy winters and rain-drenched summers, Sakhalin is increasing in population. Thousands of members of a Russian colonizing organization are reported settling on the island.

Once Part of Siberian Mainland

Sakhalin sprawls along the Pacific coast of Asia, a neighbor of, but not a part of, the chain of volcanoes of that region. Scientists aver that Sakhalin once was a part of the mainland of Siberia. The island is equal in area to the State of West Virginia and its mountainous terrain is somewhat similar, but its shape resembles only the elongated panhandle of that State. In some places the island is but 20 to 30 miles wide, while in length it would spread from Norfolk, Virginia, to the neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts, if it were transferred to a map of the United States.

Sakhalin did not successfully beckon to foreigners until recent years. During the latter part of the last century a mere handful of Russians and Japanese joined the natives of the island.

Russian trappers and the worst of Russia's criminals, who were exiled there and later liberated, were among the first large group of foreigners to visit the northern part of the island. Meanwhile Japanese fishermen were swarming to the excellent fishing grounds off the south and east coasts.

But the Japanese settlements were temporary. When the first chill blast swept down from the north in the fall, the fishermen scurried to their homeland. When winter set in, only a few Japanese were seen in the village streets. Most of the flimsy Japanese houses passed with the first strong wind.

A Land of Furs, Oil and Timber

The Russians remained secure in their log huts and animal-skin clothing. Foxes, skunks, deer, squirrels, bears and many other furry beasts were plentiful.

Sakhalin now has a permanent population of more than 200,000, for the island has proved to be more than a good fishing ground and trappers' haven. During the early part of this century someone drilled a hole and struck oil. About the same time someone's pick unearthed rich coal deposits, and someone's business eye saw the potential wealth in the island's 8,000,000 acres of timber.

To-day increasing numbers of oil derricks are springing up on the island, coal miners are penetrating deeper into the bowels of the earth, and paper mills are making a "dent" in the forests. Gold also has been mined on Sakhalin, but not in large quantities.

Nature has fought back at attempts to develop Sakhalin. Besides the uncomfortable climate, there are few streams navigable at all, and most of those are clogged with ice most of the year.

A few miles of good road are to be found along the coast, but snowdrifts thwart progress on these in winter. The island's first railroad was a short line connecting two fishing ports on the south and east coasts with the capital of the Japanese (southern) portion of the island.

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through 3,000 miles of ice-filled water to Bering Sea, and on to Japan. This "Northeast Passage" has been accomplished only twice before.

Note: See also: "A Wonderer under Sea," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1932; "From the Mediterranean to the Yellow Sea by Motor," and "Photographing the Eclipse of 1932 from the Air," November, 1932; "Into Burning Hadhramaut," and "The Society's Map of the Antarctic," October, 1932; "The Society's Special Medal Awarded to Amelia Earhart," September, 1932; "Flights from Arctic to Equator," April, 1932; "First over the Roof of the World by Motor," March, 1932; "The Travels of George Washington," January, 1932, and "A Round Trip to Davy Jones's Locker," June, 1931.

Bulletin No. 3, January 23, 1933.

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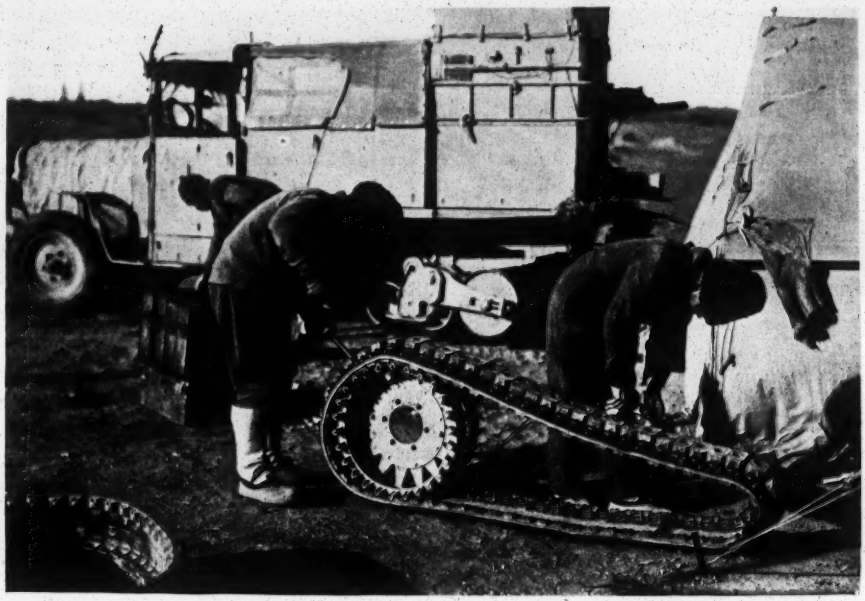

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IN ROADLESS ASIA THESE BANDS BLAZED NEW TRAILS

One of the tractor cars of the Citroën-Haardt Trans-Asiatic Expedition, which completed the first motor crossing of the largest continent in 1932, undergoing repairs in the heart of the Mongolian Desert. In front of each car a roller was suspended to prevent the steering wheels from sinking into sand and mud.

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Pikes Peak, North America's Best Known Mountain

FROM the top of Pikes Peak, North America's best known mountain, the New Year was ushered in by a display of fireworks that was visible in Denver and Pueblo, and for hundreds of miles on the plains to the east.

This exhibition, from a natural stage 14,110 feet high, has been presented each year for nearly a decade and has become the unique and outstanding feature of Colorado's New Year celebration. It is conducted by a group of mountain climbers, known as the Add-A-Man Club.

Plans Made in the Autumn

Each autumn, these lovers of the out-of-doors ship more than a ton of fireworks to the top of the peak on the cog railway, before it suspends service for the winter. On the last day of December a little group of climbers pushes its way afoot through the snow and sub-zero winds to the summit, and at midnight sets off its pyrotechnic greeting to the New Year.

The conquest of Pikes Peak in winter would astound Captain Zebulon Pike, whose name it bears. Pike first saw the mountain from far to the southeast, when he went West in 1806 to explore the southern part of the Louisiana Purchase. He called it "The Grand Peak."

But he never set foot on it. Like a typical tenderfoot, he tried, naïvely, to climb it before the noon meal one autumn day. After two days of hard scrambling he reached the top of a lower, near-by mountain and gravely declared that "no human being could have ascended to its summit."

Climbing Pikes Peak's 14,110 feet was found in later years to be a reasonably easy matter. For forty years now a cog railway has been carrying thousands of passengers to the cool, breezy top every summer. An automobile highway also extends to the summit now, and along it in midsummer moves a steady stream of traffic.

Up the last 12 miles of the Pikes Peak Highway is run each Labor Day one of the classic American motor-car races; and cars have covered this looping, steep-climbing, breath-taking route in a trifle more than 17 minutes.

Towers over Colorado's Third City

Pikes Peak towers over Colorado Springs, the third largest city in Colorado. The slopes of the great mountain begin to rise virtually at the city's edge, and the crest is only ten miles away.

In summer Colorado Springs' 33,000 population is nearly doubled by visitors, for about it are concentrated many unusual scenic features. Beside the great peak there is Manitou, with its medicinal springs; and, in other directions, caves, scenic canyons, waterfalls, the tumbled rock formations of the Garden of the Gods, and trails that thread the forests over hill and mountain. Hotels are scattered through the city and suburbs and are even perched on near-by mountain tops.

The soaring pinnacles of sandstone in the Garden of the Gods near Colorado Springs once lay horizontally. But when mighty geologic forces pushed up the molten granite core of the Rockies millions of years ago, the sandstones were dragged from their beds and stood on end. Through unnumbered centuries other natural forces—rain, frost and wind—have carved them into the grotesque forms of today. The Garden of the Gods area is a park, owned by the cities of Colorado Springs and Manitou.

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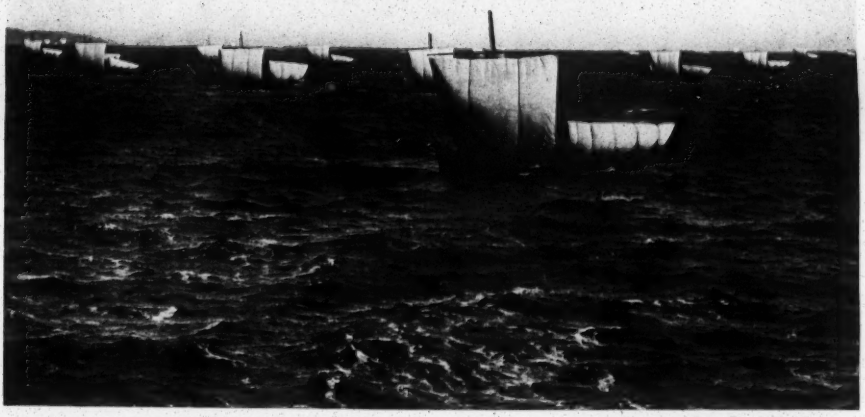
Sakhalin was first visited by Russians shortly after the "gold rush" in California. Japan and Russia were undecided as to which government owned the bleak area until 1875, when Japan released its claim, and Sakhalin was Russian until 1905. In that year the southern portion of the island became Japanese territory by the terms of the Treaty of Portsmouth.

Note: For additional reading and illustrations about near-by regions see: "Tokyo To-Day," *National Geographic Magazine*, February, 1932; "Some Impressions of 100,000 Miles of Travel," May, 1930; "Russia of the Hour," November, 1926; "With an Exile in Arctic Siberia," December, 1924; "The Empire of the Risen Sun," October, 1923; "The Far Eastern Republic," June 1922; "The Geography of Japan," July, 1921; and "The Making of a Japanese Newspaper," October, 1920.

Bulletin No. 4, January 23, 1933.

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Back copies of several recent issues of the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN are exhausted. Hence requests from teachers who wish their files complete cannot always be filled. A lapse in your receipt of THE BULLETIN may be avoided by sending your renewal remittance of 25 cents promptly when you are notified that your subscription is expired. Because these Bulletins represent a substantial gift to schools from the National Geographic Society's educational fund, the expense of advertising or circulation promotion cannot be undertaken as would be the case with a commercial publication. The Society must rely upon supervisory officials and teachers to call them to the attention of their colleagues who might use them to advantage in their geography, social sciences, and literature classes.



© *Photograph by David J. Martin*

A JAPANESE FISHING FLEET SETS SAIL FOR THE FISHING BANKS

In such tiny but sturdy craft most of the vast quantities of seafood consumed annually by the Japanese people are caught. Each summer a fishing fleet visits the waters of Sakhalin Island, whose southern portion belongs to Japan, and returns in the autumn with its catch. The Japanese are skilled sailors and move these vessels, with their pillow-case sails, rapidly through the roughest seas.

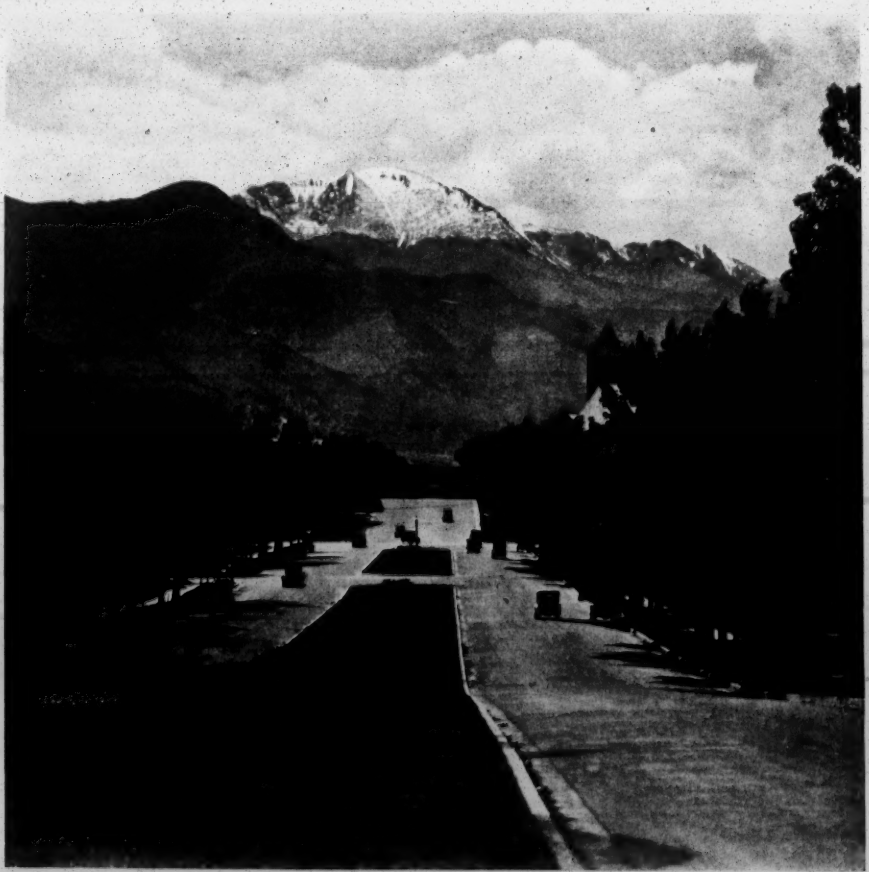
Visitors to the Garden of the Gods, calling imagination to their aid, see in the jagged rocks devils and angels, animals and birds, and palaces so elaborate that they might be Abt Volger's fantasy of sound frozen into stone.

On the slopes near Pikes Peak, as in many other sections of the Front Range, conditions are ideal for winter sports enthusiasts. The winters are comparatively mild in the cities of the plains near the eastern foot of the Rockies, but a few miles to the west, among the foothills and mountains, is an abundance of snow. Excellent highways make it possible to reach these playgrounds from congested city streets in a few minutes or hours.

The students of one public school near Colorado Springs bought a bus which they use to transport loads of skiers to the snowfields a few miles to the west.

Note: See also "Colorado, A Barrier That Became a Goal," *National Geographic Magazine*, July, 1932; "Santa Fe Trail, Path to Empire," August, 1929; "Seeing America with Lindbergh," January, 1928; and "The Land of the Best," April, 1916.

Bulletin No. 5, January 23, 1933.



© *Photograph by H. L. Standley*

COLORADO SPRINGS "POINTS" A BOULEVARD AT PIKES PEAK

North America's most famous mountain rears its summit, only 10 miles from the heart of Colorado's third largest city. A cog railway, an automobile highway, and trails for riders and hikers lead through evergreen forests, and over the bleak region above the timber line, to its crest.

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